ISSUE #3 2019

PERSPECTIVES

A PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FRATERNITY/SORORITY ADVISORS

TO BE A BETTER LEADER, BECOME A BETTER HUMAN

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

A common misnomer in higher education is every student affairs practitioner loves a good teambuilder. I, for one, do not. The word teambuilding conjures up images of hokey activities putting pressure on us introverts to wax philosophical on the spot. That said, I place high value on the process of building a team and creating a work environment and culture where people can thrive.

I have thought a lot about team dynamics and workplace environment lately. As some of you know, a little over a year ago I changed professional roles at the college. After 17 years working for the same supervisor and with largely the same coworkers, I was on a new office team - one in which I had a new supervisory role and was the new person on the college's senior leadership team. I found myself contemplating how to build one team while simultaneously figuring out my lane on another. What was the culture? What did my team need from me? Do I simply slip into the existing fabric or do I try to help it evolve? Just when I thought I had that figured out, there was transition in the senior leadership team, and I was asking the same questions in order to help onboard new vice presidents.

There are many ways to be an architect of effective teams and office environments. Common readings exist about workplace culture; establishing group commitments for how a team will engage; self-assessments such as DiSC, Myers-Briggs, and StrengthsFinder which help coworkers identify strategies for working together; and yes, teambuilders. Equally important is including an exploration of how our identities, cultural upbringings and expectations, implicit biases, and structures that center power and privilege impact the ways we show up and determine our ability to succeed in the work environment.

Take for example a common reading our leadership team participated in using the book "Mastering Civility: A Manifesto For The Workplace" (Christine Porath, 2016). Before even cracking the spine, we spent quite a bit of time discussing the word civility, what that meant, and how the word is perceived in different spaces. Some shared the notion of civility and asking people to be civil has been used as a means to tone police and silence voices that are seen as too loud or too emotional. Others shared thoughts that some view a request for civility as another way of demanding political correctness (used pejoratively). To me, this discussion was just as important as the reading itself. It provided me a set of lenses with which to think about the author's guidance and how it could be applied in a culturally competent way.

Many of us spend as much time, if not more, with our coworkers as our family and friends. Achieving job satisfaction, work-life harmony, and personal fulfillment is much simpler when you feel affirmed in who you are, work seamlessly with colleagues, and love where you work. Retention of employees in the fraternity/sorority industry matters. We cannot move the needle on creating a safe and meaningful fraternity/sorority membership experience if we cannot retain dedicated staff who believe in the power of that experience. Let us keep the conversation going about how we can create teams and workplaces that set our members up for sustainable success.

Wendi Kinney
President

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

"Do what you love, and you'll never work another day in your life."

This phrase appears in greeting cards, inspirational artwork, and commencement addresses. It is often shared as career advice for graduating students and lauded as an "x" factor when reflecting upon professional success. Over the years, this phrase — and the sentiment driving it — has become a mantra for self-evaluating personal and professional balance, and a non-negotiable for finding fulfillment within one's job.

How accurate is this phrase, though? Is it realistic — or helpful — to think one's career will never feel like work? What is "work" supposed to feel like? Difficult? Boring? Stressful? Is one wrong to love a job and also acknowledge it's not always fun? It reflects a relatively privileged and selfish concept of employment, if this phrase suggests the goal is to escape any experience inclusive of responsibilities one might not enjoy or be passionate about.

Passion is one element that drives many professionals to enter and stay in this field. It can be a powerful motivator for commitment to the work of supporting the fraternity/sorority experience. However, challenges arise when a focus on personal passion takes precedence over the actual work and personal fulfillment supersedes the fulfillment of one's professional role.

This challenge is reflected in graduate programs that focus on theoretical concepts and professional philosophies but not the pragmatic skills needed to excel and persist in this work.

It's present when new and young professionals try to prove themselves based on arbitrary and misguided markers of success. They confuse self-concept and worth with validation from the field, burn out when that validation doesn't exist, and then change jobs or leave the industry within a few years.

It's seen when mid and senior-level professionals lack the skills, perspective, or willingness to refocus priorities, step back from the front lines, craft a vision, and empower others to realize that vision.

And it's pervasive within the fraternity/sorority industry when we prioritize personal passion and quests for fulfillment through temporary means of validation. This comes at the expense of authentic and effective partnerships, awareness of what it takes to create sustainable change, and commitment to the difficult — and certainly not always easy or fun — work this field calls for.

Within fraternity/sorority life, we often grapple with how to address issues that continue to plague this industry. We recycle ideas, champion educational programs, advocate for policy and legislative change, and complain about limited resources. What we don't talk about, however, is the work — the people, offices, and organizations, and whether or not they're functioning, let alone optimizing performance. Perhaps if we spend a bit more time focusing on the "work" aspect of our jobs, we might achieve more success in the areas we're passionate about.

This issue of Perspectives does not focus on students and alumni/ae or how to solve the increasingly complex problems this industry faces. It does not focus on educational programs, best practices, or student success stories. For many, it will not showcase the aspects of this work you are passionate about.

Instead, it is about us … employees tasked with accomplishing desired outcomes for specific roles. It acknowledges we must accomplish those outcomes to receive positive performance evaluations and promotions, so we can continue paying the bills. It speaks to the messy aspects rarely discussed; not the messiness of working with students but rather in navigating a workplace, developing strong teams, and creating offices and organizations that maximize talent and make people want to stick around.

As always, we thank our authors for their willingness to put forth compelling ideas that spark critical thought. We hope the concepts within these pages provide insights for creating more effective environments and professional experiences, so we are not only better equipped to succeed, but also to find fulfillment in the daily reality of this work instead of what we think this work ought to.

Noah Borton & Brooke Goodman
Co-Editors

WHAT'S YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Prompt: How do you think the needs of workers in the fraternity/sorority profession will change in the future, and what is one way our work environments will need to evolve to meet those needs?

Brian Joyce, Ph.D.

Dartmouth College

Director of Greek Life

Fraternity/sorority life is becoming increasingly complex. Professionals in our field manage significant liability for ourselves, our students, and the institution. Sometimes it seems as though much of the work I do on a daily basis requires more of a law degree than a student affairs degree. Our commitment to holistic student development and student learning often conflicts with a pressing need to be more knowledgeable about federal, state, and local laws.

As fraternity/sorority professionals, we often find ourselves managing and balancing any number of compliance issues for the institution. How do new marijuana laws affect fraternity/sorority housing? How do town zoning ordinances dictate institutional rules with unrecognized fraternities living on private property? How do First Amendment freedom of association and freedom of speech laws affect our work? These are only a sampling of the hot button issues currently associated with fraternities and sororities.

These issues are complex. Our colleagues and work environments need to recognize the expertise of fraternity/sorority life professionals in navigating these difficult and overlapping challenges. At the same time, fraternity/sorority life professionals need increased training in applying relevant laws and ordinances (building upon the governance competency in AFA's Core Competencies). The legal landscape is evolving. Our work environments must significantly invest in our professional development in new and different ways as we are the frontline for applying and interpreting compliance within these evolving expectations.

Melissa Kish

Zeta Beta Tau

Chief Operating Officer

I believe two of the biggest shifts we will see in the future are:

1. Continued high turnover and the need for positions aligning with passions. We need people to stay in positions to learn and grow in the work, and we need to provide coaching and training that builds resilience in staff. Employers need to better define what the work will be. Employees need to listen and make choices based on what the job is, not on what they hope it will be.
2. A lot of our work in this field is very reactionary … and sometimes short-sighted. As we continue to gather meaningful data, work in partnership, and aim for high expectations, I hope we start to see a shift allowing for more proactive work to occur. This shift will create a need for those doing the work to have a stronger skill set in both strategic and tactical thinking.

The greatest way we need to evolve to meet these needs is to move toward a culture of design thinking. This is done by creating a balance between technology and economic viability, as well as environments that focus on the people we serve first — who they are, what matters to them, and how they learn. Only then can we think differently and create experiences that truly add value for our students. Design thinking allows staff to be creative and innovative while also balancing organizational priorities.

Kevin Carey
Director of Student Involvement
Illinois Wesleyan University

Prevention, awareness, and response continue to be the three areas I connect to the work of a fraternity/sorority advisor (FSA). As someone who has worked at both mid-size and small, liberal arts institutions with fraternities and sororities, I've learned we are much more than an FSA to the community. In the current higher education and fraternity/sorority life landscapes, I believe we also serve as prevention educators to the respective communities we support.

Many FSAs have shifted their attention away from providing a highly engaging Greek Week to implementing wellness weeks, bystander intervention programs, and peer education initiatives specific to their community needs. These initiatives focused on hazing, alcohol awareness, drug and substance abuse, and sexual violence continue to impact and challenge fraternity/sorority communities and their members. While FSAs are not doing this work alone, they often primarily support the advising and planning of these prevention-based initiatives.

Cohen and Smith's (1999) work on the six levels of their Spectrum of Prevention connects this concept to action-oriented prevention work. These levels include: strengthening individual knowledge and skills, promoting community education, educating providers, fostering coalitions and networks, changing organizational practices, and influencing policy.[1] Each of these six areas manifest in our work as advocates and educators of health, safety, and wellness in a fraternity/sorority community, and in turn, support the college and university at-large.

FSAs strengthen individual knowledge and skills by addressing issues and concerns around policies in action through risk management, safe social hosting, and educating on intervention methods. FSAs encourage and coach chapter and council leadership to host and create community education on topics surrounding hazing, sexual violence, and alcohol and drug awareness through programming weeks and one-time events. The relationships built with faculty, staff, chapter advisors, and local communities benefit from prevention work within a fraternity/sorority community. These partnerships with providers include educating chapter advisors on similar topics and challenges students experience. The coalitions and networks built with prevention staff, counselors, and administrators begin to allow our students to see the levels of support they have as members of a fraternity/sorority when they experience harm or need help navigating risk-related issues. Based upon behaviors and social norms in the fraternity/sorority community, FSAs must adopt new organizational practices and guide students through change in addressing issues and concerns related to health and safety. In the same manner, we assist students in making logical and realistic policy change surrounding harm reduction and anti-violence.

If you break down the work we do as FSAs and connect it to Cohen and Smith's (1999) Spectrum of Prevention, we impact the awareness and well-being of fraternity/sorority members. To me, we are not "just" a FSA. We are prevention educators who advise fraternity/sorority communities.

[1] Cohen, L., & Swift, S. (1999). The Spectrum of Prevention: Developing a comprehensive approach to injury prevention. Injury Prevention, 5, 203-207.

Seen on Instagram:

jessnicoleryan Data driven solutions to risk reduction, rentention and relevancy. But we need strong educated seasoned professionals for this work and therefore we need to invest in fsa's as professionals and stop making them the lowest paid SApros on a campus working 60+ hours a week, this way they avoid burnout and see fsa as a career rather than stepping stone!

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TO BE A BETTER LEADER BECOME A BETTER HUMAN

The future of work has become a hot topic in response to the accelerating rate of change in the way work gets done in today's world. This rapid change is coupled with the reality that inflation-adjusted wages have declined while the cost of living continues to rise.[1] As a result, the ways employees and organizations operate must also change. However, an overwhelming amount of evidence suggests strategies for maximizing performance and productivity have not evolved much since the industrial revolution.

Henry Ford, a pioneer of assembly line production, once said, "Why is it every time I ask for a pair of hands, they come with a brain attached?"

In the past, the gold standard of management success was to maximize workers' physical efforts. Today, particularly in a knowledge and service-oriented field such as higher education, the goal has become to leverage workers' emotional, intellectual, and relational talents.

In its Global Human Capital Trends survey this year, Deloitte, one of the largest management consultancies in the world, reported 80 percent of respondents identified leadership as a high priority for their organizations, while only 41 percent said their organizations were ready to meet current needs.[2]

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1 Clifton, J. & Harter, J. (2019). It's the Manager: Gallup finds the quality of managers and team leaders is the single biggest factor in your organization's long-term success. Gallup.

2 Kaji, J., Hurley, B., Gangopadhyay, N., Bhat, R., & Khan, A. (2019). Leading the social enterprise: Reinvent with a human focus 2019 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends.

3 Ibid.

Why haven't management strategies kept pace?

Deloitte found 85 percent of employees around the world are not engaged or are actively disengaged from their jobs, while financial stress, mental stress, and the average number of hours worked are at an all-time high.[3] Gallup, Inc., which boasts it possesses more data and insights on citizens, customers, employees, and students than any other organization, estimated two of every three employees in the United States is disengaged.[1]

Nonetheless, as the world experiences unprecedented levels of political, economic, social, and technological disruptions, the ability to develop individual people remains the biggest determinant of an organization's success.

In hierarchical, top-down organizations, information and strategy were concentrated at the top of those organizations, where it flowed in a single direction downward through the organization. In those settings, managers were primarily tasked with implementation and accountability. Now, in a world where the pace of change has increased dramatically, modern workplaces must be agile, matrixed environments where information can flow freely and strategy can be shaped collaboratively.

> *"The paradox of today is that while we live in a world of amazing technology, it is — and always will be — human potential that moves us forward.* (Deloitte, p. 5).

The world of professional sports analytics — and so-called "Moneyball" strategies — have gone from novelties to necessities. Yet, the highest performing organizations continue to place a premium on their ability to develop individuals. In a commencement speech at Clark University, Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie offered a masterclass on the human side of leadership.

"We use data analytics as much as any professional sports team — and I'd be the first to tell you crunching the numbers can tell us a lot about performance," Lurie told the graduates at Clark University. "But in the end, you have to make a judgment about human character that no algorithm can really capture. … That kind of leadership and the success it generates isn't about sports. It's about trust. To be sure, healthy competition can make us all perform better as individuals as we strive to improve. But when it comes to solving problems, study after study shows the most effective organizations aren't built on individual genius, but on diverse groups who trust and respect one another."[5]

Gallup has long been a leader in such studies. For more than 80 years the company has studied what makes a great life. In large part, people want the basic necessities of safety, food, and shelter — followed by having a family and owning a home, which has colloquially become known as "the American Dream." Now, having a good job has become a higher priority than anything other than basic human necessities.[6]

However, having a "great job" is truly transformational. Great jobs have the same qualities as "good" jobs, such as working 30+ hours per week and receiving a living-wage paycheck. Yet, great jobs engage employees in meaningful work while also providing opportunities for individual growth and development in the workplace. Deloitte agrees, "We see an opportunity for employers to refresh and expand the concept of 'employee experience' to address the 'human experience' at work — building on an understanding of worker aspirations to connect work back to the impact it has not only on the organization but also society as a whole" (Deloitte, p. 6).

What is the most significant way to impact individual workers and drive their performance in personal, powerful ways, thereby transforming organizations and communities?

In its new book by Jim Clifton and Jim Harter, "It's the Manager," Gallup presents findings from its largest and longest global study on the future of workplaces. This study includes tens of millions of interviews of employees and managers over a 30-year period. They found 70 percent of the variance in team engagement is determined solely by the manager.[7]

In its 2019 report, Deloitte echoes Gallup's findings. "Developing leaders is the perennial issue of our time. … To be effective in the 21st century, leaders must take a nuanced approach to pursuing traditional business goals: an approach that takes into account the new context in which such goals must be achieved, and that draws on critical new competencies — including leading through change, embracing ambiguity and uncertainty, and understanding digital, cognitive, and AI-driven technologies-to get there" (Deloitte, p. 6).

What are the building blocks of successful management in this new era?

One of the most convincing answers came from a surprising source. Although Google has long been one of

4 Clifton, J. & Harter, J. (2019). It's the Manager

5 Gantt, D. (2019). Eagles owner: Doug Pederson's "empathy" makes him a great coach. [online] Available at: http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2019/05/20/eagles-owner-doug-pedersons-empathy-makes-him-a-great-coach/ [Accessed 22 May 2019].

6 Clifton, J. & Harter, J. (2019). It's the Manager

7 Ibid.

the most admired companies in the world, it has not always embraced the power of management. In 2002, company founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin effectively eliminated managers by moving to a flat organization. When this unintended experiment proved disastrous a few months later, they brought managers back into the company's structure. The experiment, dubbed Project Oxygen, shifted from "Do managers matter?" to "What if every Googler had an awesome manager?" In 2008, Google announced the eight behavioral abilities the best leaders exemplified and in 2018, revised the original list and added two more.

The behaviors of Google's best managers include:

- Is a good coach
- Empowers the team and does not micromanage
- Creates an inclusive team environment, showing concern for success and well-being
- Is productive and results-oriented
- Is a good communicator — listens and shares information
- Supports career development and discusses performance
- Has a clear vision/strategy for the team
- Has key technical skills to help advise the team
- Collaborates across Google
- Is a strong decision-maker

As a follow up to Project Oxygen, Google embarked on Project Aristotle — a two-year, 180-team quest to find the critical components of team effectiveness. As you may expect from a data-driven company like Google, Project Aristotle originally sought to create an algorithm of backgrounds, skills, and traits that could predict the key ingredients for any team's success. It was not until they began looking at less tangible factors that clear patterns began to emerge. In other words, the culture of the team mattered more than the composition of the team.

The specific characteristics that rose to the surface include:

- Psychological Safety: Team members feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other.
- Dependability: Team members get things done on time and meet Google's high bar for excellence.
- Structure & Clarity: Team members have clear roles, plans, and goals.
- Meaning: Work is personally important to team members.
- Impact: Team members think their work matters and creates change.

Of these five elements, psychological safety is by far the most important, serving as a sort of foundation for the other four, which echoes Patrick Lencioni's Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team, placing "trust" at the base of the pyramid. Gallup's Four Needs of Followers provides similar themes, including Trust, Compassion, Stability, and Hope.

These analyses underscore the hard work leaders must embrace consistently and intentionally creating a culture that empowers and supports every individual team member. As Clifton and Harter identified, "culture has a direct, measurable impact on performance."[8] Organizations that have done the work of transforming their cultures in this way have seen a 34 percent reduction in absenteeism, a 42 percent reduction in safety incidents, and a 19 percent improvement in quality.

What is the key to a manager's success in a world of accelerating change?

Although Clifton and Harter distill more than 50 distinct strategies for the future of organizations, one thing emerges above the others. "If leaders were to prioritize one action, Gallup recommends they equip their managers to become coaches."[9] The more managers invest in the individual development of their workers, the more creativity and energy those workers invest in their work. Coaching language and skills have become pervasive, particularly in higher education.[10] However, in addition to Gallup's recommendation, a coaching approach can provide the culture and strategies necessary for success in today's workplace.

Not surprisingly, the idea of psychological safety is fundamental to positive and productive coaching relationships. Amy C. Edmondson, author of "Fearless Organizations," defines psychological safety as:

A belief that neither the formal nor informal consequences of interpersonal risks, like asking for help or admitting a failure, will be punitive. … Psychological safety exists when people feel their workplace is an environment where they can speak up, offer ideas, and ask questions without fear of being punished or embarrassed.[11]

The International Coach Federation is a global organization that sets standards and provides certification for the coaching profession. They identify the abilities "to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust," and "to be fully conscious and create spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident" as two of the 11 components of its core competencies. The more employees are able to generate ideas, seek clarification, or voice concerns without fear, the more the organization is able to benefit from diverse perspectives and respond in a constantly changing world.

[8] Clifton, J. & Harter, J. (2019). It's the Manager

[9] Ibid.

[10] Robinson, C. E. (2015). Academic/Success coaching: A description of an emerging field in higher education. ProQuest, UMI Dissertation Publishing. Retrieved from http://0-search.proquest.com.source.unco. edu/docview/1690276690?pq-origsite=summon

[11] Edmondson, A. C. (2018). The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth. Wiley.

Changing a culture is no easy task, but managers and team leaders must model the way. To adapt a famous quote by U.S. President Harry S. Truman, "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the blame." By implementing and modeling a culture of curiosity and openness, leaders can set the stage for a psychologically safe environment.

STRATEGY #1 *Model, prioritize, recognize, and reward learning behaviors such as admitting errors and mistakes, asking for help, debriefing events and initiatives, and distilling insights.*

One of Gallup's more intriguing findings includes not just the failure of workplace perks to significantly impact engagement and performance, but the fact these perks are little more than bribes. Although game rooms, latte machines, and parties increase employee satisfaction, they do not develop employees or enhance their ability to contribute to the mission and find meaning in their work, which is a longer-lasting, more powerful source of motivation.

Deloitte describes the need to transition from top-down, work-centric approaches to employee engagement and bottom-up, individual-centric approaches. "While the employee experience journey may start with a focus on the workplace, perks and rewards, in time it must focus on the more human elements of the work itself to truly create meaning. A true human experience is one that embeds meaning into work and enables every employee to contribute in the most positive, supportive, and personal way" (Deloitte, 50).

STRATEGY #2 *Take time to understand each employee's interests, skills, strengths, and values, and look for opportunities to leverage and maximize them through their work.*

In 2018, employees left their places of work at the highest rate since 2001. However, according to LinkedIn's 2019 Workforce Learning Report, 94 percent of employees said they would stay at a company if it invested in their learning. Gallup also reported 35 percent of workers said they had changed jobs in the last three years, and half of employees said they were actively looking for jobs or watching for openings. They described "career growth opportunities" as the number one reason people change jobs.

> *"The more managers invest in the individual development of their workers, the more creativity and energy those workers invest in their work.*

However, retention is not the only reason to invest in continuous learning. "Evolving work demands and skills requirements are creating an enormous demand for new skills and capabilities. … (Learning) is becoming more integrated with work; it is becoming more personal; and it is shifting slowly toward lifelong models" (Deloitte, p. 7). Coaching is, by its nature, a learning strategy. The coach asks questions "that evoke discovery, insight, commitment, or action" and "create greater clarity, possibility, or new learning" (ICF). The focus must be on the future, not the past. In traditional environments, feedback is experienced as an evaluation of one's performance, rather than a learning opportunity, partly because feedback is delivered too long after the fact. Instead, when managers listen, observe, and communicate with employees in the moment, the more the employee — and by extension, the organization or team itself — is positioned for success.

STRATEGY #3 *Frequent, meaningful conversations set the stage for collaboration, enhanced performance, and perpetual learning.*

By developing and relentlessly promoting a culture of psychological safety, personal fulfillment, and perpetual learning, managers tear down the counterproductive and outdated top-down approach to management, empowering employees to become the very best they can be and lifting the performance and productivity of the entire organization.

Chad Ellsworth

Chad Ellsworth is a Board-Certified Coach (BCC) and Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach. He led the Office for Fraternity & Sorority Life at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities from 2004 to 2011, and is the author of "Building Up Without Tearing Down: How to Cultivate Heroic Leadership in You and Your Organization."

Combatting the facebook Exit:

Persistence & Career Longevity for Women of Color in Fraternity & Sorority Life

| MARTIA BRAWNER KING, VERONICA MOORE, & ANGELA KING TAYLOR

Fraternity/Sorority Professional
Fall 2019 ·
Making it Facebook official: After 10 years in student affairs, it is with mixed feelings and a heavy heart I announce I am leaving the field for a new opportunity.
108
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A social media post like the one above is common in higher education. When seven-day work weeks filled with eight days of responsibilities are at times proclaimed as a badge of honor, longevity in the field of higher education — and more specifically in fraternity/sorority life — becomes a hot topic. While the general topic of longevity in higher education is of value, there is one important facet of this topic garnering less attention – the longevity of women of color in the industry. This article highlights the experiences of three women of color who collectively maintain more than 40 years of experience in higher education. They will share their experiences throughout their career journeys, stances on the idea of the "burned out workaholic," and the importance of having women of color strongly represented in the field.

Martia Brawner King

I didn't meet a student affairs professional at career day. I never dressed like one for Halloween or even knew what it was before my junior year in college. It was not until my sorority sister, who recognized I loved to create and run events for the chapter and I truly loved my job in the financial aid office, told me about student affairs. Her exact words were, "You know you could do this for a career right? Check out student affairs." Thus, my journey began. Like many others, it was involvement plus encouragement that attracted me to this field, but it is not what has sustained me.

The challenges of staying in the field for 15 years — with 12 at one institution — are vast. The intersections of my identity bring forth personal and professional challenges making it difficult to navigate the landscape of student affairs. I have encountered racism, sexism, ageism, and had my personal style and credibility questioned — all of which are disheartening. Others' responses to my loud voice, ever changing hair, big earrings, inner-city vernacular, questions posed regarding representation in hiring practices or promotional materials … those challenges were not new to me; I endured many of them as an undergraduate student. I expected student affairs to be more nurturing and supportive, yet my expectations and reality did not always align. After my first year in the field, I called one of my professors to talk through the unfairness, favoritism, and my disdain for one of my colleague's practices. My professor exclaimed it was normal and I needed to work through it. So I did.

My resolve is fueled by my commitment to the work, my support system, and having realistic expectations. I love helping students be successful and identify how their co-curricular experiences give them tools to navigate life. My cup is filled by my faith, family, and friends that support me no matter what.

Being affirmed, challenged, and heard are important for my success. I find this in my friends (aka my crew) in student affairs when we listen and provide strategic advice to each other. We create a safe space to be vulnerable and welcoming. We recognize and challenge negative self-talk and shut down imposter syndrome. Our space is free of microaggressions and it celebrates me as an individual. Those spaces are needed for black women like myself.

Social media pages, podcasts, and cohorts have been established to help black women and other minoritized groups have that space. As a young black woman, wife, mother, and scholar, it is important for me to be authentic and share with other black women the path may not be easy but it is worth it. Our representation in this field is critical. As institutions and organizations implement frameworks to retain minoritized students, we must do the same to retain staff. Black women are important in this field from the entry level position to the senior leadership role. Our representation, our work, and our perspective is needed.

As a young black woman, wife, mother, and scholar, it is important for me to be authentic and share with other black women the path may not be easy but it is worth it.

Veronica Moore

"You can't be what you can't see."
Dr. Amber Johnson

I cannot share my personal journey in higher education without recounting the path to this point. Place a Chicago city girl in a rural environment among a very small percentage of people of her "melanated" skin color and tell her to thrive. This is what I encountered twice over. The first was in Kenosha, Wisconsin and the second in Macomb, Illinois. Both relocations were among the hardest transitions of my life. These moves were harder than leaving the nest and heading off to be a college athlete. They were also harder than moving 12 hours away from my support system to start a new life in Pennsylvania. They were almost as hard as my transition during the first month of being a new mother.

I was raised in inner city Chicago in the 1980s. I was accustomed to seeing people that looked like me daily. I also experienced the "melting pot" of Chicago culture. Though the neighborhoods were — and in some instances still are — segregated by ethnic group, you could not escape the necessary interactions with racial groups different than your own.

This was not the case in Kenosha or Macomb. Picture the following: a rural setting with cabbage patches and corn fields as you exit the highway onto the "main road" leading to a picturesque campus sitting on Lake Michigan.

When I stepped foot on campus at Carthage College, it became evident to me for the first time that I was a black woman from a working-class family. I almost hyperventilated in the van from the culture shock of it all. This city girl asked her mother, "Where are you taking me? This is the country! Turn this van around right now. I'm not going!"

The culture shock of the cornfields was just the beginning. I found myself in many situations as the sole or one of few brown faces on campus. The one exception was the Tarble Athletic Recreation Center where ALL the black kids were!

I had heard of this "real world" before, but I certainly had no idea what it meant. With the stark realization of my new environment, I became hypersensitive to my identity as a black woman. I found myself having to overly explain my point of view in class, on the field, and in many other instances with fellow students and other faculty and staff. My assertive nature caused me to be coined as the "angry black woman." The impetus for this perceived persona was the lack of resources and compassion for the minority student experience, along with the lack of visibility of faculty and staff of color. Faced with this level of adversity for the first time, I had two choices — fight or flight. The latter was not an option. I had to succeed. So, I put on my track spikes and ran my way to opportunity after opportunity on that campus. I built a support system consisting of my fellow minority students, one black staff member, and my coach. Had it not been for the sacrifices of others made for my benefit, I would not be writing this piece today.

Then, the cornfields of Kenosha led to the cow farms of Macomb. This was not my anticipated path. I had no idea the town existed until one day, my Panhellenic advisor sent an email asking if any graduating seniors were interested in working with fraternities and sororities after graduation. I did not have a job lined up and I really was not thrilled about a corporate career in graphic design. Similar to Martia's story, I enjoyed my involvement as a student leader and the opportunities afforded to me through my sorority experience. So, in the fall of 2005, I was off to Western Illinois University. I found myself in another situation of fight or flight that, this time, proved to be much more difficult than the first.

The all too familiar rural setting was once again the backdrop to my transition experience. Although there were many more black and brown faces on this campus, the transition was no easier. There was so much unfamiliarity all at once, and I often found myself on the verge of depression. The things that made life normal — like finding somewhere to buy your hair products, a salon to get your hair done, and a decent place to purchase your preferred style of clothing — were hard to come by. What may seem trivial to some was an important part of a foundation I did not have. The little things added up, and the resulting stress and anxiety chipped away at my ability to handle the bigger challenges I faced while adjusting to graduate school and charting my course in life. Yet, once again I found good people, built my support system, and worked hard. I found my way through and made it to the next stage in life and career.

The challenges did not simply stop, however, when I received my first paycheck in fraternity/sorority life (FSL). The same things I encountered as a student regarding a successful transition, I experienced as a woman of color in this profession. It has been cumbersome to navigate systems of oppression, "innocent" microaggressions, and environments unwelcoming to your presence or perspective. Perseverance and grit have been necessary traits to succeed. I learned these traits through trial and error and through the pain of being misunderstood solely based upon my race.

My experience is not unique. Many professionals of color — not just women — also navigate blatant disregard for who they are personally and professionally in spaces where they are the minority. In some instances, our white counterparts are afforded opportunities without question while a woman of color, who is capable and qualified, is left scrutinized and undervalued. These instances, if experienced repeatedly, create toxic environments that do not lead to job satisfaction or performance. By calling attention to this, my hope is colleagues in this industry can work together to find solutions and show women of color there is a place for them on college campuses and in FSL.

The things that made life normal — like finding somewhere to buy your hair products, a salon to get your hair done, and a decent place to purchase your preferred style of clothing — were hard to come by.

Angela King Taylor

Time and time again, seasoned higher education professionals tell new and mid-level colleagues there is value in being a "lifer" in the field of FSL. There are countless conference presentations about paths to longevity in the field. In theory, this longevity is what should propel the fraternal movement forward. For a fortunate few, this is possible because they have stumbled upon the right institution, at the right time, with the right supervisor and adequate resources. Sounds pretty stochastic, right? For most professionals this is a terrible option.

FSL will continue to lose professionals due to unrealistic expectations. Somehow, we have managed to create a culture of unhealthy demands associated with the FSL professional's job responsibilities. Professionals are expected to consistently spend late nights and weekends attending chapter, council, and university events and meetings. In reality, attendance at some of these meetings is unfruitful.

Unfortunately, some professionals glorify the excessive work hours and unhealthy commitment to the field as a badge of honor. In some ways, this glorification and

perceived expectation of unhealthy practice echoes conversations we often have with students about hazing in their organizations. Although it is natural for work to be part of one's identity, it should not singularly define one's identity. While FSL professionals are doing good and important work, they are not curing a deadly disease. While fraternities and sororities are student-led organizations, the field has created a culture requiring professionals to micromanage the experience. Some might argue it is for good reason; regardless, it is still unrealistic.

A counter to the unhealthy work ethic can be referred to as work-life balance, work-life integration, or self-care. They have different meanings to some and are used interchangeably for others, but they all share the same sentiment: professionals desire healthy expectations around their work environment. Unfortunately, until we are able to create healthier expectations, we will continue to lose professionals who are willing to leave the field to find that balance.

We must ask why. Why are FSL professionals expected to operate under these circumstances? Liability, perhaps? Fraternities and sororities can be expensive. They can bring reproach upon institutions and can be costly depending on the transgression. As a result, universities take proactive and reactive measures to negate this possibility. They reactively create policies and procedures after every transgression and often expect FSL professionals will proactively babysit fraternity/sorority members. There is an unrealistic expectation they will always be able to account for and explain the behavior and decisions of members. During these litigious times, FSL professionals must consider the potential of being named in a lawsuit. Even if the professional has done everything "right," a lawsuit can be stressful. This type of culture does not cultivate lifetime professionals.

In conjunction with unrealistic expectations, it seems FSL professionals garner little respect for their profession. They are consistently underestimated while being expected to create stellar educational programming, be premier advisors, manage high level risk, create strategic plans, and assess the overall health of a community. It is a thankless job, and those who benefit from these professionals' sacrifices are first in line to criticize and sometimes never in line to express gratitude. When FSL professionals seek employment in new functional areas, they must prove they have transferable skills to make the switch. Higher education and external stakeholders often underestimate the skills needed to stay current and advance in the FSL profession. FSL professionals are expected to go above and beyond for embarrassingly minimal pay and sometimes no acknowledgement.

Like most student affairs areas, FSL professionals often tout developing students as the ultimate reward. The reward is not significant enough to account for poor pay, unrealistic expectations, and consistently prioritizing work over one's personal needs. If we seek to create longevity in the field, we must make a change. This will require a significant culture shift among a field of professionals entrenched in poor habits and colleges/universities constantly battling institutional isomorphism. The survival and advancement of the FSL profession depends on this shift.

> Unfortunately, some professionals glorify the excessive work hours and unhealthy commitment to the field as a badge of honor.

The women in these stories have persisted; they have found a path. However, Facebook feeds with plenty of "goodbye higher education" posts reveal many other talented women have not. One important consideration remains — why should people care? Does it matter if more women of color are able to find longer careers in this profession?

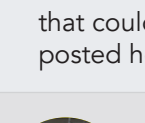
The fact is, students who are women of color face the same issues highlighted by the stories above. Women of color in this industry are often held responsible for the experiences of underrepresented populations on campus. This may not be in their job descriptions, but these students yearn for safe spaces. So, they naturally gravitate toward trusted role models to help them navigate the maze of inequities they experience in daily campus life. Students of color need reassurance that a department's staff can empathize with what they are experiencing. If there continues to be a mass exodus of women who look like the students needing the most support, where will they turn? Yes, other women who do not identify as women of color can and should be an important part of the safety net students need. However, there remains a unique value in connecting with someone who has walked a similar path. Students, and fellow colleagues, need to see experienced role models who can inspire a belief they too can rise to be influential trail blazers and change agents.

The reality is, many future role models do not make it to that stage of their careers. Burnout threatens the longevity of women of color because of the long hours of programming in addition to the lack of resources and support afforded to them to "stay on the job." Higher education must examine and shift the mindset around unrealistic expectations of work performance. If we do not check this type of behavior, the ambitious young professional may see examples of poor boundary setting and excessive work as something to emulate, increasing the likelihood of an early career exit. Furthermore, the experienced professional that stays on this track of professional martyrdom may hit a roadblock and professional identity crisis, leading them to feel as if they

have no other choice but to spring toward the next shiny opportunity providing freedom and flexibility.

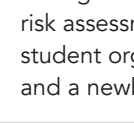
Many factors lead women of color to leave the field. However, if more women have supportive environments creating spaces for open dialogue on this topic of longevity, many more may persist. In fact, they might even find a new sense of commitment and loyalty when they feel as if they have been invested in.

Why does this matter? Because in the next year, a woman will sit in her new office, in her first job, wondering if she has what it takes. A woman entering her freshman year of college will anxiously scan the dining hall at orientation in hopes of finding a face that might understand what she is feeling. A woman will return home from an event on campus and walk into a dark house after her kids have gone to bed — again — and will wonder how many more bedtime stories she can handle missing. There will be women of color — both students and professionals — on every campus trying to find their paths. How sad would it be if the woman that could find these people … the woman that could offer support … the woman that could be a beacon of what is possible ... just posted her "goodbye" to higher education?



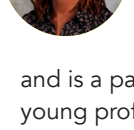
Martia Brawner King

Martia Brawner King, doctoral candidate, received degrees in ethnic studies from Bowling Green State University and student affairs at Wright State University. She values the co-curricular experiences at Purdue through leadership development, organization advising, and risk assessment, along with Purdue's legacy and high-impact student organizations. She is a devoted wife and mom of twins and a newborn.



Veronica Moore

Veronica Moore is the director of educational programs for Delta Upsilon Fraternity. She has over 13 years of experience in higher education and is a passionate advocate for the talent development of young professionals in the field.



Angela King Taylor

Angela King Taylor hails from East Chicago, IN. She received her B.S. in business management from Hampton University where she was initiated into the Gamma Theta chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Angela completed her M.S.Ed. in higher education at Old Dominion University. She has worked with fraternal organizations for 15 years, and she is currently a doctoral student at Vanderbilt University.

The following tips can inform a transparent dialogue around how to more effectively create a culture inclusive of women of color:

- Obtain the perspective of women of color in a respectful manner. Ask questions and give opportunities for them to share from their lenses on how topics, programs, and opportunities may be interpreted.
- Ensure space is created to encourage — and not silence — the perspective of women of color and the value they bring. This can be done by taking a moment to acknowledge what you do and do not know. Assumptions made about someone's experience or perspective can be dangerous. Ask questions for clarity and don't assume an experience for one woman of color represents the entire population of black and brown women worldwide.
- Ensure policies and procedures are equitable.
- Provide training or resources to all staff to ensure cultural competency and awareness is a prioritized skillset and expectation among staff members.
- Ensure work environments are fair, expectations are reasonable and clear, and individual efforts are recognized. Supervisors, as well as role models in higher education, need to dismantle the idea that overworked, underpaid, and undervalued professionals are the norm. They must continue to elevate the conversation around impact vs busy.

TIM WILKINSON

A colleague working on an AFA Annual Meeting presentation once asked me to sum up the experiences of being a student affairs professional with a movie quote. I went with, "This is the business we've chosen" from The Godfather: Part II. This quote referred to a very different field than student affairs, but it should resonate with managers throughout this industry. In graduate programs, we learn this field is unpredictable, under-resourced, and full of pressure. Within student affairs, challenges such as clarifying roles, building skills, seeking professional development opportunities, offering valuable opinions, building strong coworker relationships, and mapping out a common mission are keys for achieving success. These challenges come with creating a team dynamic that is both supportive of individual members' growth and development while ensuring goals and objectives are met. A manager needs to develop that dynamic by fusing a viable organizational structure with a healthy dose of vulnerability and honesty.

CREATING A TEAM DYNAMIC:

A VIEW FROM THE GARBAGE CAN

KEY ELEMENTS of Organizational Culture

Per Morgan (1997) key elements include:

Holistic: Organizational culture is always more than the sum of its parts. The dynamics of any student affairs team changes from semester to semester. Staff members transition in and out. Institutional and divisional priorities change. Resources are allocated in or reallocated out. Students change. Crises, challenges, and tragedies require unexpected responses. Even in less stressful times, members of a team have ever-changing levels of experience, passion, ambition, and challenges outside of work. These factors play into the consistently shifting dynamic that units work within. Managers must work with both the entire team and the individual staff members to identify, name, and strategize for when those variables could influence the group's work.

Historically determined: The dynamic of a team builds on the successes and challenges of those who came before. Change challenges previously established norms in a team culture. This can be both a healthy and unhealthy practice if team members are not diligent about re-establishing norms over time. For example, a team dynamic that encourages members to support one another's initiatives by attendance at programs or events could quickly create an expectation whereby those same members ignore personal obligations. This especially holds true when new staff members are on-boarded into a dynamic they have not agreed upon or bought into.

Ritualistic and symbolic in nature: Rituals can provide certainty and simplicity to the organization. They can include everything from methods to create and track annual goals and priorities, to the arrangement of agenda items for staff one on ones, to continued use of a time-tested performance evaluation platform. Those same rituals can also become devices keeping a team in a rut. Have you ever tried challenging the structure of a staff meeting? Thought maybe it was time to sunset the same training used for the past decade? The ability to evaluate the role of rituals within organizational culture can be a key test in examining the ability to change a team dynamic. Managers need to work with staff to collect feedback about the structures meant to streamline performance.

Socially constructed: Organizational culture is maintained not only in the mind of team members, but also in the minds of stakeholders such as students, alumni/ae, faculty and staff, parents, and external partners. Units with a healthy team dynamic examine the unwritten rules and ask, "How did we get here?" and "Who do we let shape our culture?" If the unit constantly stops all work to handle a request from the vice president of student affairs (VPSA) or executive director (ED), is that because the need is critical and time-sensitive or because the manager allowed the perception that the "VP/ED needs to be kept happy" to become a rule?

Soft: One frustration many managers have when tackling organizational culture and team dynamics is it feels "squishy" and can be difficult to quantify. A productive organizational culture should act as a compass for giving direction to priorities, as well as the social glue for which staff members find identity and challenge within the team. Many organizations attempt to develop that compass with mission and vision statements, and then let them sit on the front of their web page. However, translating these formal statements into guides for organizational culture requires additional effort. Otherwise, they will lack actionable meaning for team members.

Encouraging reflection in smaller, more consistent ways is a great technique to put substance around something that feels squishy. One can quantify progress made over a semester by using five minutes at the beginning of each staff meeting to have team members write down and share how they feel they have contributed to the culture of the team this week. This regularity allows managers to look for trends over the course of a semester, engage different processing styles of team members, and provide opportunity for follow-up discussion or reflection in subsequent staff meetings and one-on-ones.

Culture Eats Strategy

The largest challenge in creating and maintaining a team dynamic is unpacking the culture of the team. Considering the student affairs field, it is appropriate the word "culture" derives from the idea of cultivation: the process of tilling and developing the land.[1] Working through a team dynamic is understanding organizational culture is full of beliefs, routines, and rituals that are disparate from one group to another. When individuals enter a new work environment, they quickly have their personal and professional values affirmed and/or tested against whatever culture existed prior to their arrival. A shifting organizational culture, if not acknowledged, can become hard to quantify and harder to get stakeholder agreement on. Therefore, it is vital the topic of organizational culture be something successful teams consistently discuss.

The Challenge of Vulnerability and Trust

Patrick Lencioni famously wrote about vulnerability-based trust; the idea that team members must learn quickly to acknowledge mistakes, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities for growth.[3] For vulnerability-based trust to have a chance, the manager needs to examine their own educational and occupational privilege and take the lead in sharing lessons learned and areas for improvement. Managers also need to consider how identity, personality, and processing styles affect willingness to share and the manner in which individuals are able to share with each other. Utilizing assessments, such as the Gallup Strengthsfinder or Riso-Hudson Enneagram type indicator, give staff permission to share more about their personalities and worldviews. Layering these with assessments on cross-cultural communication and conflict styles open up deeper conversations on identity and privilege that are integral for members of a dynamic team to find their entry point into vulnerability-based trust.

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1 Morgan, G. (1997). Images of Organization. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications. docview/1690276690?pq-origsite=summon

2 Leetaru, L. (2019). The Wrong Ways to Strengthen Culture. Harvard Business Review. 97(4).

Life in the Garbage Can

One of the most important reasons for a transparent and vulnerable team dynamic is oftentimes, decision-making occurs in a far less measured and structured approach than we want to admit. When units are frequently understaffed, under-resourced, and under-developed, managers are often required to make decisions on the fly without time to give careful consideration to the challenges at hand. The "Garbage Can Model" offers a framework for understanding decision making in this environment. In this process, programs, solutions, and participants move from one choice opportunity to another in such a way that the nature of the choice, the time it takes, and the problems it solves all depend on a relatively complicated intermeshing of elements. These include the mix of choices available at any one time, mix of problems that have access to the organization, mix of solutions looking for problems, and the outside demands on decision makers.[4]

The Garbage Can framework allows managers to be honest and vulnerable with themselves and their teams when decisions need to be made quickly and, oftentimes, without all the facts that would lead to more measured options. Decisions are based on a mixture of timing and coincidence as opposed to an objectively determined "right" answer. The Garbage Can model of decision-making acknowledges the role of participants, and other circumstances, integral to the context of choices available and decisions made. Cohen referred to the various circumstances and contexts as "streams." There are four streams in the garbage can:

Solutions stream: As opposed to allowing an initiative or decision to be planned, created, assessed, and evaluated, managers are regularly forced to anticipate next steps without time for the completion of a feedback loop. As a result, managers may make resource decisions — both human and financial — seemingly at odds with a unit's strategic plan or program outcomes. This organizational inconsistency is more the norm than most would like to admit. The more frequently managers can be honest about the rationale behind the decision, the better chance team members will buy into the decision.

Choice opportunities stream: Sometimes resources are practical and significant drivers for making choices, as opposed to a single element of a strategic planning process. Managers must often take advantage of resource opportunities as they are presented. This could come in the form of staffing or financial resources, unexpected political support, or buy-in from an unanticipated ally.

Participants stream: Solutions are frequently opportunities in search of problems, and the expertise of team members can often determine which problems to address. Available opportunities can make the determination as to which solutions are selected, such as a new hire that brings a specific skill-set previously missing from a team. Sometimes the solution is as simple as selecting the staff member that brings the problem to the staff meeting, has the open spot on their calendar, or has the most relevant transferable skills.

Problems stream: Conversely, no semester goes without unanticipated problems in need of solutions. Unanticipated vacancies, political and relational challenges, chapter and council issues, and individual student needs ensure there will be regular occurrences where time and energy will be directed toward problems that are not part of the strategic plan.

The Garbage Can is not where managers want to work from when making decisions, and yet the day-to-day reality of the work makes it a practical reality. Decisions made inside the Garbage Can tend to be reactive in nature and often take teams away from mission and vision. From the perspective of team dynamic, Garbage Can decisions can pull a team into an environment of confusion and distrust. Managers must spend time with the team working through Garbage Can decisions to attempt to tie the decision back to mission and vision, or to gauge the effect the decision had on the organization's strategic planning process when alignment with strategic initiatives is not possible. Managers also need to analyze how the decision creates challenges for staff members impacted by the decision.

Trust the Process

Regardless of the exact approach used to create a team dynamic, it all starts by remembering the business we have chosen. The act of creating a trusting, vulnerable environment calls for imagination, resilience, and honesty. Team dynamics are not a zero-sum game, but instead the practice of allowing for all members to find their place as part of that team. Managers need to take advantage of the resources and opportunities available, as well as consider the unique personalities, identities, and styles making up a team. Team members need to trust the process set out for them while using that structure to provide feedback, input, and energy to perpetuate the culture of the group while working through the unanticipated challenges and solutions that are part of the Garbage Can.

It is time to put in the work.

Tim Wilkinson

Tim Wilkinson has worked with fraternity and sorority communities for over two decades, spending the bulk of that time also supervising professional staff. Tim currently serves as the associate dean for student engagement at Wake Forest University, and he is also working on his Ed.D. in educational leadership with a concentration in higher education administration at Appalachian State University. Tim was a recipient of the 2015 Sue Kraft Fussell Distinguished Service Award.

[3] Lencioni, P. (2002). The Five Dysfunctions of a team: A leadership fable. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

[4] Manning, K. (2018). Organizational theory in higher education (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

PRIORITY #1: PEOPLE

JESSI SHERIDAN

During my first post-graduate professional role, I had the opportunity to work with a strong team of student affairs professionals that supported my work, challenged students in all the right ways, and consistently strived for excellence in the fraternal industry. I was fortunate to have a dedicated supervisor who often reminded us he "came to work for [his] staff." This was nice to hear at the time, but eleven years later, it resonates now more than ever. While I did not define it as such years ago, my supervisor created a human experience in the workplace by focusing first on his people and then on students, alumni, and administration.

In the book "Bring Your Human to Work," author Erica Keswin states while everyone defines a human experience differently, all definitions generally include the concepts of work-life balance, sustainable work practices, and authentic, purpose-driven, work cultures. Within an industry centered on relationships, it is critical we put our number one asset — staff — first. A human workplace not only honors relationships but also builds upon them by focusing on how each individual and their unique strengths are critical to team success.

Our leadership tends to go wrong when we forget about staff and solely focus on stakeholders, putting health and wellbeing, professional growth, family time, and other personal values on the back burner to meet the demands of students, alumni, and administration. This loss of focus leads to the loss of great professionals in the higher education and student affairs industry. What people look for in their work experience has changed as generational wants, needs, and demands have shifted. As such, we have the power to change this industry's retention issues by listening to these wants, needs, and demands to create a more human work experience.

The Problem

Discussion about high turnover and low retention is not new. A 2016 AFA white paper titled, "What We Know About Our Members and Why It Matters" noted the average age of the AFA membership is 32 with the most common age being 27. This clearly indicates a retention issue within the fraternity/sorority profession. The question then becomes, why are competent young professionals leaving after only a few short years? I argue new and mid-level professionals find themselves torn between the work they love and a workplace culture that inhibits the ability to find fulfillment and healthy balance, in and out of the workplace.

Culture refers to how it feels to interact with a company, consumer, employee, vendor, or partner. A meaningful culture is a place where people feel part of something bigger than themselves. Meaningful cultures focus on values, belonging, growth of individuals, and impact the organization has on a community. If fraternities and sororities claim to be values-based organizations focused on sisterhood, brotherhood, leadership development, and service, then all organizations and sorority/fraternity life offices should be the definition of a meaningful culture.

We need to first invest in our people before we can invest in our stakeholders. We have to hit pause and put on our own oxygen masks before helping others, or this cycle of burnout and low retention will never end. We will not solve the larger systemic issues plaguing the industry without addressing issues of staff retention.

The Causes

The millennial generation will comprise nearly 75 percent of the global workforce by 2025. While this generation is ridiculed for being "lazy" and prone to job hopping, the reality is millennials, as well as Generation Z, seek meaningful and purposeful work fostering happiness and engagement. When one is not invested in their work, disengagement becomes the impetus for a new career search. Millennials are selecting jobs based on a worthwhile mission rather than salary.[4]

It should not be a surprise people seek a human experience in the workplace. While the workforce may currently be dominated by the millennial generation, it is not the only generation demanding more from employers in areas of health and wellbeing, professional development, and flexible work environments.

In the last decade, the role of human resources has started to change, challenging companies and organizations to shift ways of thinking to retain top talent. The changes in social media and technology, flexible benefits, fluid feedback processes, and the gig economy have started to reconstruct what was once a very company-focused culture to a more employee-focused and individualized workplace, now referred to as human capital. Early adopters of this human capital mindset shifted from processing paperwork to making sure employees feel valued. These companies and organizations understand the importance of making the workplace more human by throwing out traditional ways of thinking to enhance culture and, ultimately, retain their best employees.

We often toss around reasons why people leave this industry, providing common explanations such as working long hours for little pay or the stress of a role and demands from college/university administrators. If we continue to dig deeper, we find the inability for our workplaces to adapt to changing generational wants and needs could be the cause of our industry's retention issue.

[1] Keswin, E. (2019). Bring your human to work. New York: McGraw-Hill.

[2] Ibid.

The Solutions

Solutions to the retention issue can emerge by asking a few questions:

1. We talk to students about leading with values and being mission-minded, but do we as professionals live that in our operations and mindsets?
2. Do we put people first throughout the entire employee lifecycle, from attraction to separation?
3. Are we adapting to the changing demographics, demands, and priorities of those in our workspaces?

Prioritizing Values

Philadelphia-based healthcare consulting company, Vynamic, is a prime example of an organization creating a values-focused workplace. Vynamic derives its name from the letter "V" for "values and vitality," infused with the word "dynamic." Vynamic's quest is to be the healthiest company in the world. With one visit to the company's office, it is evident their employees live that mission.

Dan Caslista, founder of Vynamic, knew without putting his employees first, Vynamic would be like any other consulting company — driving employees into the ground with a grueling on-the-go lifestyle. Instead, Dan created a company that encourages and expects team members to take care of themselves and others and to regard work as a place they can happily grow and thrive. From the nutritional snack options offered in the office to the "Healthy Hours" held on Fridays where employees participate in exercise classes together, Vynamic lives up to its values. The company is widely recognized for its "zzzMail" policy holding members accountable for sending emails outside of policy hours (10 p.m. to 6 a.m. on weekdays plus no email on weekends and holidays). The thought behind "zzzMail" is refreshed and happy employees facilitate stronger client relations.

Another example of a values and mission-focused company is Saxbys, a hospitality and coffee company, founded in 2005 by CEO Nick Bayer. Saxbys' mission is to "Make Life Better" for those who enter their cafes and the communities they reside in. Saxbys is about more than coffee — it is about people. When recruiting team members, Saxbys focuses on Apple's motto of "Hire for attitude and train for skill." Saxbys wants to know potential employees can understand and apply company values, regardless of their knowledge about coffee.

One of Saxbys' core values is: "We are a community, serving our community." To live that value, Saxbys partners with seven colleges and universities to offer the Experiential Learning Program (ELP) that provides undergraduate students with entrepreneurial experiences to supplement in-class learning. The ELP gives students the opportunity to be a full-time manager of a cafe, fully operating the business. Saxbys realizes it has power to give back to communities by providing access to education and growth and, ultimately, creating sustainable change.

While we may not work in the healthcare or hospitality industries, we can certainly take what we learn from other industries to bolster our own. Creating a culture aligning with our values, mission, and vision illustrates we are what we say we are. This authentic approach yields more loyal, dedicated, and engaged employees.

Promoting a Growth Mindset

Another area to focus on when looking to enhance office culture is professional growth and development. Millennials have given the world the gift of understanding human beings need to grow on the job.[5] While potential costs can seem like a barrier, professional development does not require a hefty price tag. Creating a positive office culture can be done with any budget within any size organization or office as long as employers take time to genuinely invest in the happiness and well-being of their people.[6]

RevZilla, an online and brick-and-mortar motorcycle retailer, has one of the most distinctive company cultures due to recruiting team members — Zillans — that "never settle, but always enjoy the ride." Part of RevZilla's unique culture includes emphasis on educational opportunities for staff. At its headquarters, RevZilla has a dedicated classroom with classes offered weekly for continual growth and professional development. Zillans teach classes to educate all staff members, regardless of title or role, about new products, partnerships, and opportunities. RevZilla knows if it prioritizes the growth mindset of team members, it will positively affect sales and customer relations.

Within the fraternity/sorority industry, this can look like hosting a lunch-and-learn educational series facilitated by a different staff member each week. This gives the facilitator an opportunity to develop public speaking skills while also providing others opportunities to learn and engage during lunch. Other ideas include hosting a book club, developing special interest groups focusing on employees' passion areas, or partnering with a local Chamber of Commerce for free or low-cost programming.

As a foundation for individual workplace professional development programs, AFA provides a great starting point for creating professional development opportunities for teams by outlining 48 competencies that define good practice. Utilize these competencies to create a year-long professional development plan focused on proficiency gap areas to enhance staff members' strengths.

[3] **Big Demands and High Expectations: The Deloitte Millennial Survey.** United Kingdom: DTTL Global Brand & Communications, 2014. Accessed July 6, 2019. https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/About-Deloitte/gx-dttl-2014-millennial-survey-report.pdf

[4] **Koloc, N.** "What Job Candidates Really Want: Meaningful Work." Harvard Business Review. August 7, 2014. https://hbr.org/2013/04/what-job-candidates-really-wan

Disrupting the Norm

Within the student affairs profession, it is common for professionals to work excessive hours, take little vacation, and all but live in the office. Whether this norm is created by graduate programs, senior leadership expectations, college student hours, or our own inability to walk away from work, something has to give. A shift in this overworked mindset must happen, starting with managers setting the tone from the top.

Flexibility in the workplace is critical for creating a sustainable organizational culture and essential to employee happiness and retention. Flexibility can take various forms such as working from home, starting the day late or leaving the office early, family leave, or bereavement time.

Seer Interactive, a digital marketing agency, prides itself upon focusing first on its employees, their families, and then their customers. Flexibility comes in many forms at Seer, particularly within hours of operation, paid time off, and parental leave policies.

Seer recognizes each person has personal commitments and obligations. This informs the company's philosophy of working when and where employees want as long as clients and team members are supported. With the help of technology, Seer knows it is more beneficial for team members with long commutes to work from home rather than make the drive every day. In addition to unlimited time off, Seer offers "Summer Fridays" and a reduced work week during the winter holidays. In 2018, Seer recorded that on average, employees only took 3.30 weeks of time off despite having an unlimited amount of time off. Additionally, Seer offers 12 weeks of 100 percent paid parental leave for growing families. They found if people are treated well and have a flexible work environment, they will be more committed and work harder for the company and its clients.

Employees increasingly seek flexibility in the work day as it relates directly to the top two values for younger generations: family and well-being. However, what does this look like in our industry where professionals are programmed to think they must be in the office and attending to student needs 24/7?

If employees work late, let them come in later the following day. Give the team the opportunity to work remotely to catch up on emails or create new initiatives that need uninterrupted time. Review family leave policies to ensure the needs of today's diverse families are met. Discuss what bereavement time looks like for the loss of family, friends, and even pets. Look at the human aspect of the organization or office before an individual applies to their final day on staff. Effective organizations create cultures spanning the employee lifecycle that put people first.

"Effective organizations create cultures spanning the employee lifecycle that **put people first.**"

Moving Forward

Organizations and institutions can provide a more enjoyable, engaging workplace by understanding the wants and needs of team members along with adjusting to changing work styles, preferences, and technologies. The landscape is changing and so must our ways of operating. Employees want a more human experience that provides flexibility, developmental challenges, and a focus on well-being.

Adapting to changing preferences of current and future generations is critical to the retention of young professionals in this industry. This requires a look inward. Humans exist at the core of meaningful and purposeful work environments. Our people are our greatest asset, and we must create a culture focusing first on people by addressing systemic issues regarding retention and professional competence. Only then will our people be best positioned to properly address the needs and issues of our students and organizations.

Jessi Sheridan

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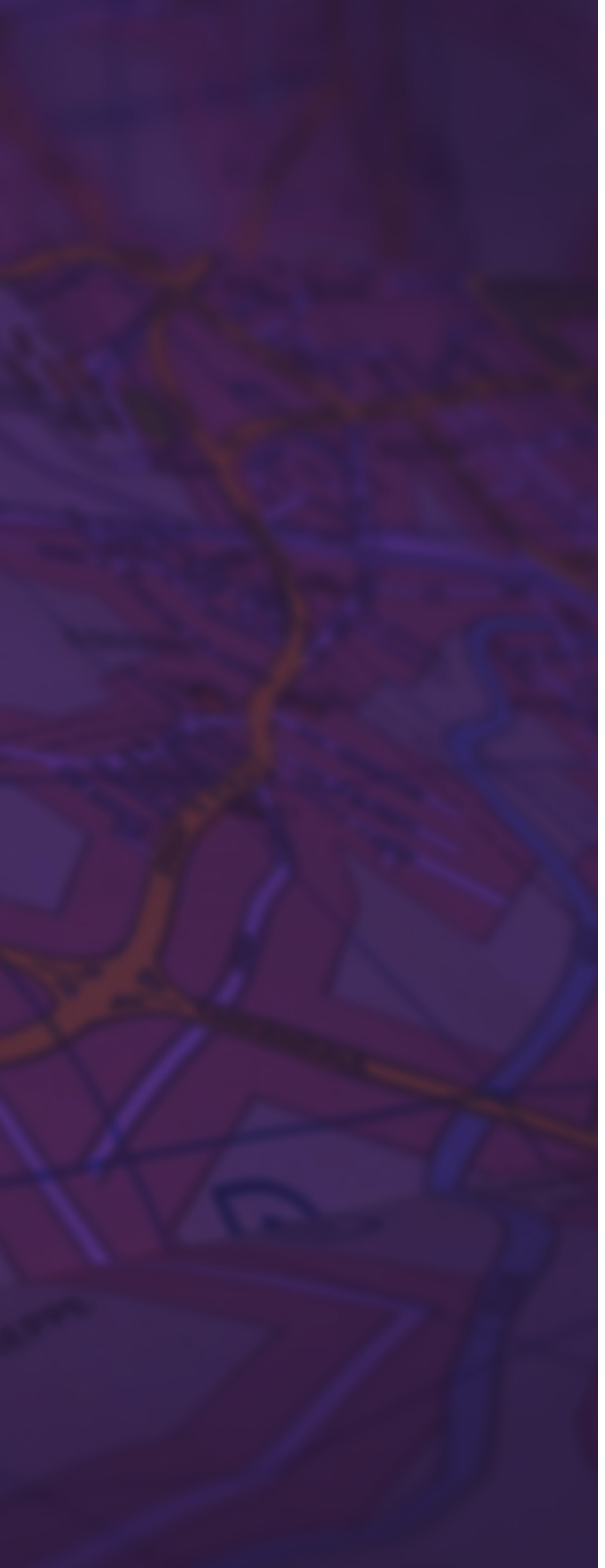
[5] Keswin, E. (2019). Bring your human to work. New York: McGraw-Hill.

[6] Kohll, A. (2018). How to build a positive company culture. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/alankohll/2018/08/14/how-to-build-a-positive-company-culture/#3029bc5849b5

MICHAEL A. GOODMAN & LINDSEY L. TEMPLETON

POSITIONING LOCATION & SETUP

NEW PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTIONS OF PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



Environments are understood through the perceptions of people within them. How individuals are attracted to or satisfied within an environment is partially a function of how they perceive, evaluate, and construct the environment. In turn, their perceptions become the reality of that environment. As environments, campus fraternity/sorority life (FSL) departments are made up of many stakeholders including staff, alumni, inter/national organizations, and students. The location of these departments is often the epicenter of the work and serves as a central location to affiliated students and campus partners. For professionals working in FSL, there is no set guideline or uniform setup to the physical structure. Some institutions have a premier location on campus, such as a student union or stand-alone building, whereas others hold a shared space within other departments and divisions on their campuses.

What people see, understand, and feel about a place assists in developing their perspective on the environment. According to Strange and Banning, "A well-planned place is seen as being active and having greater influence than just making opportunities available." When considering physical space, it is important to acknowledge the setup itself and the ways a space may dictate specific behaviors of students and staff who use it.

We illuminate these sentiments as a way to connect FSL physical environments as deeply intertwined with the overall work environment experiences for FSL professionals. While Strange and Banning also explore human aggregate and socially constructed components of environment, we are specifically illuminating physical characteristics of an environment through the unique lens of new FSL professionals one year after earning a master's degree. As a result of the variety of physical environments for fraternities and sororities, we are led to wonder about new professionals' perceptions and experiences with campus space and their physical environment(s).

We interviewed 26 new professionals working primarily in FSL during a multi-year study of new professionals' work environment experiences. This article highlights the perceptions of, and experiences with, physical environment from 22 of those professionals.

Understanding Space & Place

Departmental positioning, campus location, and space and setup were three themes that emerged with regard to the physical environment(s) associated with FSL. We share findings and implications for each of these themes.

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1 Strange, C.C. & Banning, J.H. (2015). Designing for learning: Creating campus environments for student success (2nded.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 14.

5 Ibid.

Departmental Positioning

Many FSL departments are housed in a center or office of student life or involvement (OSL).

For some participants, this positioning means they are the only one doing FSL work or they are housed in office space near individuals in other functional areas (e.g., student government, programming, orientation, campus traditions, student organizations, student conduct).

Benefits

Alexis valued the embeddedness of FSL within OSL and saw her office's positioning as a collaborative space where departments assisted each other in different ways.

Marie worked in a cubicle alongside other professionals and graduate students across functionalities. She enjoyed the community-feel and felt staff communicated well within the open space.

Logan also felt his work alongside non-FSL colleagues was collaborative, and he enjoyed the team-oriented spirit of the environment.

Challenges

Alexis highlighted tensions working alongside multiple departments and specifically those related to student conduct. She shared students often passed by FSL staff offices on their way to and from conduct hearings.

> *"That's hard because, what if it's one of my students I see walk past and you know which students they are 'cause they're walking back with a conduct officer,' and having to have those conversations, and it's hard."*

Angela determined the mixed functionalities in her large department created more challenges to her work because it added a layer of responsibilities in addition to those specific to FSL.

Becca felt there were key signature events in other functional areas that required more hands on assistance for all to engage with than assistance given to FSL programs.

Collaborate Thoughtfully, Equitably: Departments and professionals sharing space does not always mean collaboration occurs. Ask questions about collaboration expectations within a department. Furthermore, ask if the collaboration and shared engagement is equitable across all department functionalities.

- What are the big all-play events or programs requiring energy and attention from all?
- What are the busy times for different functionalities that might allow for an "out" from attendance due to other obligations?
- What is the seasonal flow of inter- and intradepartmental responsibilities?

Being transparent in this way will aid in working toward an equitable division of labor across all functional areas. Consider evaluating current collaborations and identify additional ways your department can work with others in the shared space to achieve goals or enhance student experiences. If responsible for setting department norms (e.g., supervisor, department head), it is important to create boundaries across functionality. This might include establishing a shared and public-to-all calendar or clearly identifying programs or events requiring attendance.

Campus Location

The physical location of FSL varied, and challenges were raised depending on if offices were located within a student union or other places on campus.

While Caroline's department existed within OSL, FSL was physically separate from other professionals.

Due to team expansion, some of Dominic's colleagues were positioned in other, nearby buildings on campus.

Blakely's department was housed away from and outside of other student affairs entities altogether. While she enjoyed having a physical structure dedicated to FSL, it at times was isolating and required extra attention to be paid to collaboration and communication with colleagues in her division.

She shared, *"There are obviously benefits to having our own space, and we do have a lot more room than some other offices, but I think we're missing out on some of that, people are just milling around and come through, or having campus partners so close by."*

Mike talked about the value of positioning within a student union as opposed to being housed in an academic building on campus.

Having a physical space welcoming students was also important to the work of FSL professionals.

Steven shared the design of his office was not collaborative for students and students rarely utilized the space. He shared, "Students hardly know where it is in the first place" due to its positioning away from typical traffic areas on his campus.

He shared, *"Once we're able to create that kind of relationship, students will come down, but it's really difficult trying to get that from every single student."*

In Rick's office, students were free to use a conference room for meetings, eat lunch, and hang out. People were constantly coming and going and viewed the office space as their "home away from home."

Blakely's office also had an open space in the center allowing councils and students to gather. "There are always students around, whether they're sitting there doing their homework or if they're actually doing council stuff. It doesn't really matter, we just like having students around."

Consider the Messages Your Location Sends: First, conduct an audit of the physical space your department occupies. The positioning of individuals' desks and open common spaces may influence a person to see this space as either rigid or inviting. Next — and much like the philosophy of feng shui — consider what energy your space and location emit. Whether you are sharing or in FSL-only space, think about the messages sent by your location and acknowledge what is in your control to change if needed.

- Do students and partners know where your office is located? When they get there, what do they see or feel? Is there wayfinding on campus helping students, partners, and visitors find and access you?
- If someone is in a public area, do they have a lockable drawer or cabinet? Can people put up photos? Is there privacy?
- Are there couches for students to hang out or relax between classes? Is there a front desk stopping or blocking students from accessing other parts of the office? Is the furniture comfortable and/or practical?

Examining each of these questions will help in an intentional audit of your campus location.

Space & Setup

Small benefits like being able to listen to music in one's office was a highlight for Becca, who shared the noise level in the office area often made it difficult to get things done.

Becca's office positioning was preferred compared to others in her office who had to navigate the noise of a front desk area.

Working from a cubicle, Marie shared the mass amount of people in her office area made the space noisy at times and difficult to have conversations where important or sensitive information was shared.

Rick also shared his office would get loud — especially as students utilized the space — but he did not seem to mind.

He shared, *"It's overwhelmingly positive, it's loud, it's crazy. It is positive. And it's not so much of a distraction. Obviously, there are times that it's like, 'oh my gosh I have to get all of this done and there's just [students] everywhere.'"*

Doors became a key theme associated with new professionals' experiences with their physical work environment.

Becca shared, "It's going to sound dumb, [but] I have a door. I didn't have a door as a grad student, and that was legitimately a very non-negotiable … I needed to have a door to have conversations with students."

Becca and Katrina valued the ability to close their doors or office window, and Katrina shared this was supported by colleagues.

Blakely felt having a door increased privacy for student meetings, but that people in her office still did a good job of leaving doors open to be accessible to each other and to students.

Participants also valued the close proximity to co-workers as part of their office setup.

Logan's office was positioned next to his supervisor and another colleague working with non-FSL student organizations.

The location of Dominic's office positioned him to have direct access to the division directors, thus allowing him to develop personal relationships with them.

He shared, *"The fact I'm right next to my supervisor is really important to me."*

Becca's office positioning was also next door to her supervisor, which allowed them to talk through each other's doors without having to leave their offices.

Value & Replicate Doors: It was clear doors matter to new professionals, who sought to develop comfort in their office as well as find ways to create private and meaningful spaces for students. If an individual takes many private phone calls or has conversations with students who are self-/disclosing sensitive information, a door may be a helpful way to build trust. The spirit of a door can also be replicated by providing individuals without a door a way to sign up to utilize others' offices or shared spaces while they are not in use. Finally, noise was also highlighted as a theme by participants. Consider the ways people's work ethics might be impacted by shared space or noisy open areas and offer alternatives when possible.

If there is a staff member on your team who might frequently engage in conversations about alcohol/drugs, sexual assault, and hazing, among other topics, consider creating a space for private conversations. This may mean office-sharing or blocking time in a conference room for individuals to have access as needed. Additionally, if graduate students are positioned in an open area, try to find ways to build privacy around their space or offer them access to the office space outside of office hours.

Nonverbal messages conveyed by layout, location, and arrangement of space and facilities may render a values statement about behavior. Within this context, there is also a privilege to space and place as associated with institution and FSL type, size, and functionality. Not all departments and offices are created equal. Physical environments cost money. Furthermore, future research on physical environments in FSL should be expanded to include headquarters and inter/national organizations. As the field considers topics like teleworking, shared huddle spaces, working from home, and remote employment, definitions of space and physical environment may change in the years to come.

So, look around. What messages is your physical environment conveying?

Michael A. Goodman

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Lindsey L. Templeton

Lindsey L. Templeton is a Ph.D. student at the University of Maryland, studying higher education, student affairs, and international education policy. She is a former fraternity/sorority leadership consultant, graduate assistant, resident director, and volunteer. Lindsey's research interests focus on leadership equity in higher education.

[6] Ibid.

Navigating the Unknown

As student populations grew, Alexis shared her office space and resources did not grow, thus leading to a cramped feeling in the office.

Due to team expansion, some of Dominic's colleagues were positioned in other, nearby buildings on campus. He shared his realist-based perspective, "I mean, we can't just build an office. It just doesn't happen."

Mike was aware his office was being moved, but unclear on where to exactly.

Caroline shared similar sentiments specific to structural changes occurring at her institution.

She posited, "I know our office space is probably moving. Where to? I have no idea. When will we be told? I have no idea. But I think we're moving somewhere, so we'll see what happens with that."

Marie felt like things were in limbo. She was told remodeling would happen to create more office space but, at the moment, was unclear on the restructure and how it would change her position.

WORKING REMOTELY

MEGAN FOSTER, HAYDEN RAHN, CAITLYN WESTFALL, & TAVIANNA WILLIAMS

It is no secret the fraternity/sorority industry is shifting and adapting in many ways, particularly when it comes to the ways we approach our work and manage our staff. How do we increase efficiency and productivity? How do we recruit and retain quality staff? How can our organization think differently? These are questions managers face regularly when making strategic decisions about staffing structures.

For many organizations, where and how we do our work continues to evolve. This is increasingly resulting in employees working remotely. This development impacts our organizations and presents unique benefits and challenges the following viewpoints seek to explore. As a growing trend, we believe it will be helpful to learn from professionals who have seen success working remotely, managing remote staff, or have recently transitioned to a remote position. We asked these individuals to share advice, tips, and other pieces of wisdom they have learned to help others consider if working remotely is something they are interested in, to consider when hiring remote staff, and to think about how to better train, connect, and manage current remote employees.

Caitlyn Westfall

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After working remotely for just over a year, I have become a strong advocate for remote work. Not only is it a great way for organizations to demonstrate trust in employees, but it also gives employees flexibility over where and how they work. As educators, we recognize not everyone has the same work style; when we expect all employees to work a "traditional" eight to five office job, we cannot expect to achieve optimal performance.

A few essential tips helped me adjust from working on a campus to working remotely for an organization. First, take advantage of technology. Sigma Sigma Sigma utilizes Microsoft Teams for file sharing/storing, collaboration, and quick online chats. For times when a face-to-face conversation is best, Zoom is our go-to tool. I also suggest purchasing a planner that helps map out the day down to the hour. A planner like this has been crucial in helping me transition from an office role to a remote one. Moving to the world of remote work was an adjustment but my mental health, happiness, and productivity have improved enormously because of it.

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Working remotely from Southern California produced a handful of dynamics I needed to learn how to navigate. One challenge I have experienced is learning how to work across time zones. I work three hours behind most of my coworkers, manage chapters and expansion projects across the country, and communicate with stakeholders who often assume I work in Indianapolis. As a result of this, I have learned to be successful, I must be diligent about planning my week and communicating my availability. I also rely heavily on my work calendar to ensure no meetings overlap; this has taught me to be more adaptable when planning my work day.

Long travel days have also proven to be challenging, but I navigate these by being diligent in my planning and communication as well as remaining adaptable while traveling. Ultimately, I would not be as successful in working remotely if I had not learned how to plan efficiently, communicate effectively, and understand how to be adaptable.

Remote staff should recognize the type of work — and definition of productivity —at home may differ significantly from work in the office. At home, it is easier to get into a groove of uninterrupted work time. This can mean completion of more deliverables and staying on top of daily tasks. At the office, there can be a natural pull to meetings, collaboration sessions, and increased interruptions.

It is important to take advantage of the limited opportunities for face-to-face connection when working remotely. Chat, video meetings, and phone calls can help maintain relationships with coworkers, but nothing can fully replace time in a room together. When preparing for a trip back to the office, consider meeting needs — collaboration or other meeting objectives better served in-person, pending meeting requests — and try to schedule those in advance to take advantage of this face-to-face time.

Also, recognize nurturing and managing relationships with colleagues around the water cooler, quick pop-ins, and longer lunch breaks can become necessary to make up for time away from the office. This is still work; it just needs to be planned for. Remember accomplishments in the office may need to be measured differently than when working alone at home.

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Working from home has taught me so much about myself as a professional while also boosting my productivity. While the extrovert in me loves being in an office environment, at times my naturally social disposition can hinder me from getting through my to do list. I would much rather sit and talk to a colleague about their day than complete an expense report or sort through emails. So, now whenever I need a social fix, I walk down to my neighborhood Starbucks and chat with other remote employees.

Working from home challenges me to be more intentional with my time, and I put pressure on myself to produce higher quality results. My to do lists and calendar keep me in line. Additionally, I have adopted the pomodoro technique that breaks work into 25 or 45-minute intervals. It ensures I get things done and prevents me from prematurely hopping from one task to the next. Managing my time is still something I am working to perfect. Some days I work until 8 p.m. simply because my work space is also my home. Other days, I have to remind myself I cannot do a load of laundry when I have pressing tasks that need to be completed.

In short, what I have learned is to remain productive. Remote work is a balance between productivity and discipline. If I were to give advice to others considering remote work, I would tell them to invest in high speed, reliable Wi-Fi, be available for staff and colleagues, and know when it's time to power down the laptop — work will be there tomorrow!

Gallup research shows having a friend at work is key to employee engagement. As a remote employee, opportunities to create relationships are not as natural as they would be when working in physical proximity to colleagues. Instead, the employee must take time to make time. It is important to understand the culture of the workplace to best determine how to move forward. What is the ratio of remote to traditional employees? Is everyone remote? Are you the first? There may already be a built-in framework from which to start — if so, that is great! When attempting to understand remote employment, some questions to ask include:

- What is the relationship like between remote employees?
- Are there practices in place to help create camaraderie?
- Are there opportunities for and does equipment support video conferencing?
- What is the culture for those who work remotely? Consider in and out time, personal appearance, workspace configuration, etc.

Once a better understanding for what already exists is gained, start thinking intentionally about how to create space for interaction with co-workers. It is so easy to send an email, but why not pick up the phone or make a video call instead? This will create an opening for dialogue for a few moments before jumping into the necessities. If it feels strange to randomly call someone, then don't. Schedule regular touchpoints with coworkers — ten minutes is plenty and goes a long way in building rapport. In any relationship, it always feels good when someone takes the extra step to show interest. If a coworker is a dog-lover, tell them about the puppy your sister just adopted. If they are a football fan, invite them to a fantasy league. The little touches are the foundation for developing strong working relationships. Taking time to learn about colleagues outside of their job functions will not only help remote employees feel more connected, but it will also lead to greater fulfillment for all.

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Creating an Effective Workplace

What Are You Doing to Advance Your Work Beyond the Students?

VIANCCA WILLIAMS

Defining an effective workplace can be difficult. Especially in fraternity/sorority life (FSL) where the industry is centrally focused on its primary customer: the student/member. In FSL, it is easy to focus tirelessly on the students — after all, providing support and creating a positive experience for undergraduate students is likely a strong motivating factor for why many choose to enter this field. While focusing maximum time and effort on direct student engagement and meeting student needs seems like a reasonable approach to FSL work, in practice it is unlikely to deliver optimal productivity for a work team or individuals.

More than ever, success in FSL requires action with intention, a collaborative mindset, and systems that ensure a holistic approach. This article outlines several areas professionals can focus time and energy for becoming well-rounded and balanced in their work. These approaches can help facilitate a healthier, more sustainable and productive career in FSL. Ultimately, this will result in better experiences for both students and professionals.

An effective workplace and a thriving team that efficiently utilizes resources to deliver maximum value requires an environment supporting a well-rounded approach. While student experience is the primary focus for advisors, it is important to remember individuals working in FSL serve hundreds, if not thousands of students. Making an impact on that scale requires conceptualizing work beyond individual action with a student. These roles, whether on a campus or headquarters, are dynamic and multidimensional. Therefore, FSL professionals should identify strategies to help manage their work more efficiently. To thrive in this work requires more than commitment and talent; structure and support are essential to fostering an environment where FSL professionals can succeed.

Act with Intention

For someone to be effective in their work, they need a structure providing guidance and evidence for why their work is relevant. Strategic plans and data can inform an intentional and focused approach.

- **Revisit strategic plan(s) often.** Strategic plans should create a road map for one's work, enabling a focus on priorities. Therefore, it is important to refer to them. FSL professionals should assess how they have moved their department — and organizational or institutional — strategic plan forward regularly, and at a minimum, annually. If results indicate no forward movement, it is time to redirect efforts toward a new approach. If progress has been made, efforts should continue while also looking for opportunities to refine.
- **Use assessment to make data-driven decisions.** It is imperative to gather useful data to assess all aspects of the fraternity/sorority profession. Assessment enables professionals to evaluate growth, development, and learning, while gauging if methods are facilitating desired outcomes. Data offers insights into the perspectives of those most affected by the enacted experience. Data-driven decisions focus on maximizing strategies that help operations and minimizing things not adding value. Utilizing data requires professionals to ask the right questions, analyze the results, and create action plans for future endeavors. Assessment should not be feared; it should be embraced!

Consider the Supervisor & Supervisee Relationship

Both supervisor and supervisee benefit from a positive relationship that makes a workplace effective and moves the functional area forward. Take time to cultivate a relationship by doing the following:

- **Make your supervisor look good.** This concept can be difficult to grasp for someone who is keen on self-accountability. However, any new supervisor will quickly realize the employees they supervise are a direct reflection of them – when they mess up, the supervisor also messes up; when they win, the supervisor also wins. Giving due diligence, producing quality work, and looking at individual work as the team's work helps make one's supervisor successful as well.
- **Manage up.** This concept focuses on managing one's supervisor and sometimes those above them. It is rooted in communicating needs. This includes having difficult conversations when needs are not met. Managing up also means being a resource to the supervisor by anticipating their needs and having solutions ready. Fraternity/sorority professionals are often considered the experts in their functional area — effectively managing up demonstrates that to supervisors.
- **Set employees up for success.** To do this, create effective hiring processes, fully onboard staff, conduct complete and holistic staff training, provide effective and timely feedback, evaluate staff consistently (not just during annual performance evaluation time), invest in staff via professional development, and recognize employees in a personal way when good things happen.

Cultivate Relationships

A unique aspect of FSL is the number of stakeholders invested in the experience. By taking time to invest in and cultivate strong relationships, fraternity/sorority professionals can leverage stakeholders to assist in advancing desired outcomes.

- **Foster strong relationships with colleagues.** Collaborating with others is essential in this industry. Doing this well requires taking time to actively cultivate relationships. Individuals should explicitly schedule time to get to know colleagues to avoid missing those opportunities due to getting caught up in day-to-day tasks. Timely and productive communication is also critical. It is important to avoid gossip, recognize others' talents and strengths, collaborate on projects, and provide timely feedback from a place of care. Time spent engaging in any or all of the above often result in relationships moving initiatives forward.

However, any new supervisor will quickly realize the employees they supervise are a direct reflection of them – when they mess up, the supervisor also messes up; when they win, the supervisor also wins.

- **Provide support to colleagues.** A silo effect emerges when people focus solely on their own work. This may hinder productivity because colleagues who can help work processes be more effective are not engaged. Taking time to help colleagues advance what they are working on is an important part of fostering a successful team. This is done by checking in, providing feedback, and assisting them in finding ways to collaborate.
- **Engage non-student stakeholders.** Non-student stakeholders can sometimes make or break how fraternity/sorority professionals move the needle in their work. As a result, it is important to keep lines of communication open with stakeholders such as advisors, alumni, HQ/campus, and the campus' surrounding community. Get to know these individuals, understand their needs, find reasonable solutions to issues they experience, keep them updated on the fraternity/sorority community or inter/national organization, work through conflicts together, and create avenues for them to positively engage with undergraduate members.

Master Administrative Functions

One aspect of necessary FSL functions is administrative work. Mastering administrative tasks will move work forward and help individuals advance in the future. Those who struggle with administrative tasks have a hard time advancing.

- **Create systems.** Whether it is reviewing submitted paperwork, reading policies, or filling out documents, develop a system that works for you. Professionals need to find a way to organize themselves, develop an effective follow up approach, and spend time revising this system as needed.
- **Be budget savvy.** It is important to create, manage, and ethically approach budgets. When creating a budget, consider the true price of materials and services by gathering quotes before finalizing. Additionally, look at what can be let go when asked to make budget cuts. It is easier to be proactive and ready for this request instead of working through it in the midst of a budget crisis. Even if the organization has an accounting department, individuals should keep track of their own expenses. This helps create fiscal responsibility and cultivates a culture of employees being good stewards of the institution and/or organizational dollar.

Consider Personal Needs

To be effective in their workplace, individuals need to take care of themselves and advocate for their personal and professional needs.

- **Seek professional development opportunities.** Investing in professional development is critical for keeping work in FSL fresh. Make it a priority to find ways to constantly learn. Learning does not always have to occur at conferences. It can occur via webinars, reading books and articles, conducting informational interviews, having benchmarking conversations with colleagues, or watching a TED talk. When attending conferences, webinars, or workshops, review the information, discuss knowledge discovered with colleagues and your supervisor, and create action steps for how to apply these concepts. Conferences outside the normal scope of an individual's current industry can also be helpful in providing new knowledge that is transferable to a current role.
- **Take care of yourself.** At the end of the day, effective employees take time to recharge. Take vacation time. Use sick days. Get a physical. Find a hobby and stick to it. Practice wellness strategies. Spend time with loved ones. Most importantly, remember life is not always about work.

Longevity is a concern, so to elongate time in FSL, professionals must make a concerted effort to enact these practices. Following through on these practices will have a positive impact on the work environment and on enhancing the overall student experience.

Viancca Williams
Viancca Williams is the assistant director of fraternity & sorority life in the Center for Student Involvement at the University of South Florida (USF). She is an active volunteer for the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, the Association of Fraternal Leadership and Values (AFLV), and her sorority, Alpha Chi Omega, and she serves as a co-lead facilitator for LeaderShape and the North American Interfraternity Conference programs. A native of Santurce, Puerto Rico, Viancca earned her B.A. in psychology from The University of Tampa, her M.Ed. from USF, and is currently in the dissertation phase of her Ph.D. (at USF) focusing on exploring the factors associated with retention and attrition of campus-based fraternity/sorority advisors.

How to Take Control of Your Day

To create a more effective workplace, here are some suggestions for incorporating new practices to help reframe your work:

- [ ] **Avoid filling your calendar with meetings.** Consider block scheduling — schedule time for projects and stick to those times by actually working on those projects.
- [ ] **Find time to talk to others throughout the day.** It's important to remember our work cannot be done in silos. Take time to engage with others by running ideas by them, getting feedback on performance, and working through challenging situations.
- [ ] **Don't get sucked in to email.** Like project planning, set aside times during the day to focus just on emails.
- [ ] **Make planning time a priority every week.** Use this time to create a to-do list, make agendas for meetings, and find spaces for non-student work.
- [ ] **Determine how you will prioritize your work.** A method to use is Eisenhower's Box, which has 4 quadrants: urgent and important (tasks you will do immediately), important but not urgent (tasks you will schedule for later), urgent but not important (tasks you will delegate to someone else), and neither urgent nor important (tasks you will eliminate).
- [ ] **Temper procrastination.** Be realistic in setting aside an amount of time something takes to complete. Challenge the temptation to wait until the last day to do something. Schedule work in smaller chunks, and work toward the final product piece by piece.
- [ ] **Don't get bogged down by "the mess."** Find ways to be solution-oriented. Talk through situations with others, consider root causes, find what works, and stick to that solution.
- [ ] **Give yourself deadlines.** You are your best accountability buddy — use that to your advantage.
- [ ] **Avoid multitasking.** The human brain is not wired to multitask. Do one thing at a time and give it your full attention.
- [ ] **Resist the urge to keep your door open at all times.** While we want to be available as much as possible, sometimes adding earbuds or simply closing the door might help with focus and task completion. Consider blocking time in your calendar to keep the door closed and place a note on it to share how to get ahold of you.

Who's Got NEXT

DR. ARTHUR E. DOCTOR, JR.

Hazing investigations. Budgets and finances. Recruitment. Advisors. Alumni. Senior administration. Membership intake. Parents. Risk management. Human Resources and staff management.

These are concepts professionals working in coordinator or assistant/associate director roles frequently see in action, encounter, and may be solely responsible for when working with fraternities and sororities. None of those experiences, however, can fully prepare someone for the role of director. Many — if not all — directors say their first years were spent learning "on the fly" while adapting to different situations, managing personalities, and navigating constituent expectations to ensure fraternity/sorority members have a safe and positive experience. As such, the following advice is essential for building a strong foundation during the first year of one's transition to a director role at a new institution.

1. Embrace Being the New Person

Joining a new community is exciting — especially as the individual charged with leading fraternities and sororities. It's important to face the reality there will be a lot of unknowns. Remember to rely on individuals within the community who have institutional knowledge and can provide the necessary context to navigate this new environment. Attend as many events and programs as your schedule allows — doing so will increase understanding and awareness of the campus culture while also developing support and allies for your office, team, and work. Like advice often given to new professionals, take time to sit back and observe current practice, jot down notes, and be a sponge. Explore and learn about departments that aren't traditionally affiliated with your area.

2. Relationships Matter

A number of constituent groups will be impacted by decisions your office — and student leaders within it — make. It is essential to use your first year as the director as an opportunity to interact with as many stakeholders as possible. Building rapport with chapter presidents and advisors and gaining their "buy-in" is essential when charting a vision. There are also key campus and community partners whose programs, skills, and knowledge are essential in providing educational resources for members of the fraternity/sorority community. These colleagues are often underutilized and can become part of a coalition to assist in improving programs and initiatives in your department, while also helping advocate for your work. It is also important to begin building a strong relationship with your direct supervisor, so you can establish expectations and determine how to collectively work to achieve success.

3. Be Confident Enough to Ask Questions

As a director, you are expected to be the content expert about the area(s) you oversee, so it can be intimidating to ask for help about policies and procedures directly impacting your work. However, it is better to ask questions guiding informed decision-making than leading without fully understanding the processes of your respective unit, division, and/or institution. Confidence in your abilities must also come with humility and a willingness to ask questions when seeking understanding and clarity.

4. Own It

The person who leads a functional area, is responsible for a group of staff members and volunteers, makes decisions, creates programs and initiatives, and implements the strategic vision is now you! At times, it will feel like you're facing an uphill battle. You will make tough decisions and have unpleasant conversations. There will also be moments when you create sustainable change or your students "buy-in." All of that is wrapped up in the role of director. Your staff, student leaders, alumni, parents, and other administrators will look for you to chart the path for fraternities and sororities on your respective campus. Choose confidence, choose greatness, choose to inspire; and most of all, OWN IT!

As a final note, leveraging relationships within the association is also important. It is important to reach out to directors from peer institutions to discuss ideas and brainstorm ways to improve practice. Having a circle of support is essential not only for professional success, but also for mental health and navigating difficult times during one's professional journey. A quote by Theodore Roosevelt from his speech "Citizenship in a Republic" (also known as "The Man in the Arena") sums up the role of a director of fraternity/sorority life:

> *It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.*[1]

You will not be perfect. Mistakes will happen, and each day will present a new challenge. Remember to embrace being new to the environment, build strong relationships and partnerships, ask questions with confidence, and most of all, own it.

There's just one more question to ask: **Who's Got Next?**

Dr. Arthur E. Doctor, Jr.

Dr. Arthur E. Doctor, Jr. is the director of fraternal leadership & learning at the University of Mississippi and is a volunteer with a number of national organizations. He earned a B.A. in history from Clemson University, M.S. in higher education administration from Florida State University, and an Ed.D. in student affairs leadership from the University of Georgia. Dr. Doctor is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated and volunteers with a number of civic organizations within his local community.

[1] Theodore Roosevelt, "Citizenship in a Republic" (Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris, April 23, 1910).

IS YOUR STAFF CRISIS READY?

GARY WISER & ANGELA GUILLORY

During the last five years, staff within the fraternity/sorority communities at Clemson University and Louisiana State University (LSU) have dealt with crises making national news and heavily influencing industry practice. While many AFA members may never deal with crises ranging from student deaths related to hazing or alcohol to accidents like a floor collapsing during an NPHC social event, it is important to realize every community is one incident away from making national headlines. When dealing with community-wide crises, work rhythm is interrupted and incident management takes precedence. The following strategies may offer a guide for navigating this type of impact within an environment.

Be "Crisis Ready"

This is the most important component for ensuring fraternity/sorority life staff are positioned for success. Work with risk management and compliance staff within the institution or organization to document the strategies in place to mitigate various crises the community could face. Assess the department's resources and work to ensure there is necessary funding, adequate and appropriate staffing, community prevention educational efforts, and regular and documented assessment of crisis readiness. Assess risk issues within the community to include specific chapters and behaviors. Ask questions like:

- What strategies are used to combat this behavior?
- Where are the strategies written?
- Who knows about the strategies?
- Are educational efforts compiled for easy access?
- Are there metrics and data to discuss when an incident occurs?

Focus on Staff Morale Throughout the Crisis Response

Council advisors and front-line staff receive much of the community's frustrations during the crisis response, especially when following through with administrative directives. The staff's work, efforts, and support for the good of the community may be shot down and torn apart — often by the least likely of individuals such as advisors, alumni, and headquarters staff. A common defense mechanism is for people to try to point fingers at individuals deemed responsible for the crisis. When people are frustrated, often they just want to be heard by someone they think is on the front line of it all. The stress, anxiety, and work overload may not come until months following the crisis and often after the brain's "crisis response" mode turns off. Obsession with reading event details in the media can cause more harm than good when it comes to staff morale. Staff members should wait until they know they are ready to learn the facts and should also be familiar with and open to utilizing campus and/or local resources, if needed.

Know When and What to Communicate

Get clear direction on how the institution or organization wants to educate constituents. The community needs information and guidance, and it is important to communicate often. Do not be afraid to inform, guide, and coach. Report back to the administration on actions and communication — do not wait for them to ask for information. Expect everything staff communicate in writing could go through a FOIA request or be subject to discovery in a legal proceeding. Administrators who are not members of a fraternity or sorority may have a bit of a learning curve. It is important to ask, "What is currently the most important issue to best prepare my supervisors to navigate this?" Partnerships with headquarters staff and alumni are crucial during the communication stage and help foster confidence in leadership.

Conduct a Post-Crisis Evaluation

After the crisis event has concluded, work with the institution or organizational emergency management team to evaluate each step of the process to learn what worked and what needs to improve if/when a similar crisis occurs. This is an important step in helping a team remain crisis ready.

Gary Wiser

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Angela Guillory

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PERSPECTIVES to PRACTICE

On average, American adults process 34 gigabytes (more than 100,000 words) of information daily. Our lives are flooded with Google searches, YouTube videos, Facebook and Twitter posts, and a never-ending feed of suggested reading, watching and listening. Media consumption is a constant task — conscious and subconscious — to separate the trivial from the significant, process new information, and discern meaning.

Perspectives provides a forum for ideas, opinions and experiences that is thought-provoking and innovative; shares new information; highlights best practices; and challenges thought. As a quarterly publication, we recognize *Perspectives* is a microscopic part of your general — and professional — information consumption reality. We want to ensure the content published in *Perspectives* is communicated, positioned and promoted in a way to maximize impact by encouraging continued discussion and informing practical application.

"From Perspectives to Practice" aims to provide a guide for learning through a focus on continued discussion, engagement and action. You'll find this section at the end of each issue. We hope it helps you critically examine the viewpoints offered, make meaning of the content, and identify ways for further engagement through applying the ideas in these pages to your everyday practice.

MAKING THE MOST OF THIS PUBLICATION

1. Engage with the content : Read the article more than once, and as you are reading, do the following:

- Identify one important concept, research finding, theory, or idea you learned.
- Determine why you identified that piece of information as important.
- Apply what you learned from the article to some aspect of your work.
- Take it a step further: What question(s) does the article raise for you? What are you still wondering about? What do you agree or disagree with?

2. Reflect : What stood out to you in each article? What new information was presented? Did you experience any "aha" moments?

3. Share & Discuss : Take those highlights and insights and discuss them with friends. Share them with stakeholders. Create an idea pipeline and see how the concept(s) evolve.

4. Write About It : Did something resonate with you? Frustrate you? Did reflection lead to brilliance? Put those thoughts into words and add your own viewpoints to the discussion.

5. Put it into practice : What is a key takeaway that can inform your work? How can you take that information and apply it? What is realistic? What is a longer term goal?

**Adapted from the 2017 Unmistakable Creative post, "A Quick and Effective Guide to Remember and Apply What You Read."*

CONTINUED DISCUSSION

To Be a Better Leader, Become a Better Human

Discussion Question: Does your office or workplace operate with a "human capital" mindset? If not, what is within your influence to help shift culture and create a more "human" work environment?

Discussion Question: The author references a 2018 Google report noting the company's best managers' top behavior is being a "good coach." What does it mean to be a "coach"? What are the differences between supervising, managing, and coaching, and how can balance be found across all three?

Overcoming the Facebook Exit: Persistence and Career Longevity for Women of Color in Student Affairs

Discussion Question: The authors discuss visible and invisible barriers they have — and continue to — overcome in this work. Recognizing many, if not all, of these barriers are systemic, how can individual offices within student affairs divisions or departments within headquarters or company structures create ongoing small change deconstructing oppressive systems impacting the larger whole over time?

Discussion Question: We often allude to work-life balance as critical for longevity in this field, but "work-life balance" manifests differently for everyone. Take time to create your own definitions of healthy and unhealthy "work-life balance," and conduct a self-assessment to determine where you currently fall and what room for improvement may exist.

Creating a Team Dynamic: A View From the Garbage Can

Discussion Question: Does your team reflect upon how mission and vision influence the creation and assessment of projects and initiatives? Do team members reflect upon their contributions to mission and vision?

Discussion Question: How has an unanticipated challenge impacted your team? What could you do to better prepare your team to respond to future challenges?

Priority #1: People

Discussion Question: How can your department infuse individual and group development opportunities into its culture to create an environment prioritizing personal and professional growth?

Discussion Question: If you are an office of one, what strategies have you developed to prevent burnout? If you are a supervisor, what structures can you put in place to emphasize balance within your staff by disrupting traditional work style norms within the fraternity/sorority profession?

Positioning, Location, and Setup: New Professionals' Perceptions of Physical Environment

Discussion Question: Think about your office's physical environment — is it conducive to productivity? What opportunities does the space provide? What challenges must you and/or your staff overcome based on the space?

Discussion Question: This article focuses on new professionals' perceptions. As you welcome new professionals into your office, department, organization, and/or company, what questions can you ask to ensure a productive working environment for entry-level staff?

Working Remotely

Discussion Question: This series of articles provides suggestions for effectively managing remote employees. If your office or organization is considering hiring a remote employee, what considerations need to occur prior to that decision to ensure a seamless transition into the experience?

Discussion Question: If you are a remote employee, reflect upon your average day. What strategies have you developed to help you navigate this type of work experience? What areas for improvement do you have and what steps can you take to grow in those areas?

Creating an Effective Workplace: What Are You Doing to Advance Your Work Beyond the Students?

Discussion Question: The author outlines several practices to create a productive work environment. What practices do you currently perform in your role? What practices do you have room to improve upon?

Discussion Question: In this field, we often focus all of our time and energy on the student experience, forgetting job performance — and the environment we exist in as employees — directly impacts the student experience. How can we ensure concepts such as those outlined in the article are infused into daily conversations so increased longevity in the field can occur? How can these concepts be introduced to graduate students and new professionals to help set them up for success?

Who's Got Next?

Discussion Question: What AFA Core Competencies do you see articulated in this article? How can you identify ways to improve in the core competencies to better prepare you for your next professional role?

Discussion Question: This article speaks to the experience of stepping into a director role at an institution. How can concepts in this article be translated to the experiences of stepping into a director role within an inter/national headquarters? What about moving through other career transitions such as entering the field as a new professional or from a different industry?

CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT

Read the following *Essentials* and *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors* articles that relate to the topics discussed in this issue:

- **May 2019 *Essentials*:** "Utilizing the Core Competencies as a Supervisor: Recommendations from the Professional Development Committee" by Joshua Welch and Dan Wrona
- **May 2018 *Essentials*:** "Emotional Intelligence as a Foundation for Crisis Management" by Nancy Schwartz
- **November 2016 Essentials:** "Leadership is Hard" by Monica Lee Miranda
- ***Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors*, Volume 10, Issue 1, Summer 2015:** "Operationalizing Organizational Change Theory: Implications for Practice in the Fraternity/Sorority Movement"

Check out the following books, articles, podcasts, or videos/shows that can enhance discussion of topics in this issue:

- "Six Secrets to Doing Less" - Spring 2013, Issue 70, *www.strategy-business.com*
- Podcast: *HBR IdeaCast*
- "Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't" by Jim Collins
- TEDxBloomington: "The Happy Secret to Better Work" by Shawn Anchor
- Podcast: "This Is Your Life" hosted by Michael Wyatt

Ongoing personal and professional development opportunities tied to this issue theme:

- **Complete your annual AFA Core Competencies Self Assessment emailed to all association members on September 6.** If you're a new professional or new to the association, this is a great way to identify competency levels to center professional development plans on moving forward. If this isn't your first time taking the assessment, reflect upon your previous results, celebrate areas of growth, and identify continued opportunities for increasing competence.
- **Research local opportunities for professional development workshops, certificate programs, networking groups, or seminars to engage in ongoing skillbuilding.** Your local Chamber of Commerce can be a great resource for discovering different opportunities in the area. If you work at an institution or live in an area surrounded by colleges and universities, explore opportunities to enroll in adult learning or skill-based certificate programs — many of these opportunities are low-cost and/or could be negotiated as a benefit of your current role.
- **Develop some hobbies.** The August 2019 Fast Company article "How Hobbies Can Improve Your Happiness and Productivity at Work," notes "studies show that spending time on leisure activities not only releases dopamine — that feel-good organic chemical in our brains — it may actually lead to a range of benefits that help with launching or running a competitive business." This article suggests three tips for choosing a hobby and simultaneously increasing productivity in the workplace as a result:
    1. Rediscover your childhood hobbies.
    2. Exercise a new part of your brain.
    3. Enter the flow state.

CONTINUED ACTION

1. Read and/or consider contributing to upcoming editions of *Essentials* and *Oracle*.

2. Select an article to discuss at an upcoming staff or division meeting, council meeting, with students, etc. — use it as a discussion topic to kick off the meeting and then share the conversation's outcome with the hashtag #AFAPerspectives.

3. Review the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors Core Competencies and identify ways the content relates or doesn't relate — how can you use the information gained to continue to build your professional competence?

4. Circulate an article that resonates with stakeholders based on your campus, organization, vendor, or company's circumstances.

5. Look outside of the industry — what concepts relate, challenge, or inform our thinking and practice? Who else can we learn from?

6. Reflect and write for a future issue: *Perspectives* is getting a refresh in 2020! Keep an eye out for information about exciting changes coming to the publication next year and email ***borton@deltau.org*** or ***brookegoodman01@gmail.com*** with questions, article ideas, and submissions.

7. Stay curious: Ask questions, challenge ideas, and see how this content can spark ongoing thought and practice.

Share your thoughts by Nov. 15

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CALL FOR PERSPECTIVES AUTHORS

We want you to write for AFA Perspectives!

CONTACT THE 2019 EDITORS
TO SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE IDEA

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